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One man's long journey — From a one-world crusade to the 'department of dirty tricks'

By Merle Miller

What if he should get out of his hole and explain the matter reasonably to both sides? "Fellow human beings," he would begin. "There are very few of us here who in private life would kill a man for any reason whatever. The fact that guns have been placed in our hands and some of us wear one uniform and some another is no excuse for the mass murder we are about to commit. There are differences between us, I know, but none of them worth the death of one man. Most of us are not here by our own choice. We were taken from our peaceful lives and told to fight for reasons we cannot understand. Surely we have far more in common than that which temporarily separates us. Fathers, go back to your children, who are in need of you. Husbands, go back to your young wives, who cry in the night and count the anxious days. Farmers, return to your fields, where the grain rots and the house slides into ruin. The only certain fruit of this insanity will be the rotting bodies upon which the sun will impartially shine tomorrow. Let us throw down these guns that we hate. With the morning we shall go together and in charity and hope build a new life and a new world.

—FROM "WAVES OF DARKNESS" BY CORD MEYER JR.

I first read "Waves of Darkness," the only published fiction by Cord Meyer Jr., in the fall of 1945, and I thought that it was one of the best—maybe the best—short pieces of writing that had thus far come out of the war. A few months later, on a gentle spring evening in 1946 (everything and everybody was gentler in those days), I heard Meyer speak. I took voluminous notes, so I know that he said, in part: "World government is possible. It is possible in our lifetime. We can and we will make it happen, and by so doing we shall achieve peace not only for our children but for our children's children, a peace that will survive to the end of time. . . . Those who wrap the skirts of nationalism around themselves are living in the dangerous past, and we cannot be satisfied with that because it has produced the present. . . ."

There was a standing ovation for Meyer at the end of his speech; I remember that, and later that night in my journal I put down some of what he had said and added: "... No one of my generation—at least no one I have heard or heard of—is as

passionate and persuasive a speaker as Cord Meyer. To listen to him you think that anything is possible, including world government. Not only that he writes beautifully, damn it. . . . If Cord goes into politics he'll probably not only be President of the United States; he may be the first president of the parliament of man. And if he becomes a writer, he's sure to win the Nobel Prize. At least."

The years passed; we heard that after retiring from the World Federalist crusade Cord had gone into the C.I.A., but in those days, the early nineteen-fifties, that was a respectable—even an admirable—thing for a liberal and humane man to do. It was necessary to keep the agency out of the hands of the reactionaries, and some years later didn't McGeorge Bundy, then himself still a knight in fairly shining armor, say that there were more liberal intellectuals in the C.I.A. than any place else in Government? And hadn't he named Meyer as one of the best examples?

True, in 1967, when it was revealed that Meyer was in charge of covertly funding such organizations as the National Student Association and publications like Encounter, some people, myself included, were upset at the deception and hypocrisy involved, but at least the money had gone to organizations more or less on the non-Communist left, and the main criticism, in the beginning anyway, had come from the most reactionary members of Congress, not the liberals.

But then last summer—it was a season of heart-break—Meyer went into the offices of Harper & Row to ask, among others, his old ally of the world government movement, Cass Canfield, to let the C.I.A. see the galleys of a book called "The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia." The book claimed that the C.I.A. had more than a little to do with the traffic in narcotics in Southeast Asia. Publishing it might, Meyer said, be against the best interests of this country; what's more, the book was very likely full of inaccuracies and was possibly libelous as well.

After a monumentally uninspired exchange of letters between Harper & Row and various faceless individuals in the C.I.A.—Meyer surfaced only once later, to say that he had never intended "suppressing" the book—the publisher agreed that the agency could take a look at the galleys, but did not, to be sure, promise to make any changes.

The galleys were supinely dispatched to Washington, where some presumably literate person or persons, no doubt including Meyer, read them, and a week or so later the re-

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Tom Braden

CIA Housecleaning: The Cold War Is Over

HISTORY has a way of punctuating itself without benefit of manifesto. Neither White House nor Kremlin has proclaimed that the cold war is over. Yet the departure of Richard Helms as director of the Central Intelligence Agency and the appointment of James R. Schlesinger to succeed him is a kind of period, ending an era as clearly as though Winston Churchill had come back to Fulton to revise his famous speech about the Iron Curtain.

Helms is the last of the bright young men whom Allen Dulles assembled from wartime OSS and from Wall Street law offices to help him turn the CIA into the citadel of the cold war.

Dulles is dead. So is Frank Wisner, his hard-driving and inventive assistant. So is the one-time number-three man, Tracy Barnes, tall, blond, handsome and having about him the aura of mystique as the man whom Dulles had personally chosen to parachute into Italy with surrender terms for Kesselring. So is that charming young man of feline intelligence, Desmond Fitzgerald, who once had the courage and foresight to tell Robert McNamara that the army would fail in Vietnam.

SO THE BRILLIANT and the best are gone. It is said that now the President wants someone to clean house over at "the firm," as the cold warriors from Wall St. once referred to their place of business. It is a worthwhile project. Like all bureaucracies, the one that Dulles built tended to go on doing whatever he had given it permission to do long after the need was a memory.

The 1966 "scandal" about CIA's infiltration of student and cultural groups and its use of labor unions, for example, was only a "scandal" because the activities then being conducted seemed so out of date. It was a though Americans had awakened in 1955 to the startling news that some World War II division left on say the Moselle River in inexplicable ignorance of time suddenly attacked eastward.

There were so many CIA projects at the height of the cold war that it was almost impossible for a man to keep

them in balance. The dollars were numerous, too, and so were the people who could be hired.

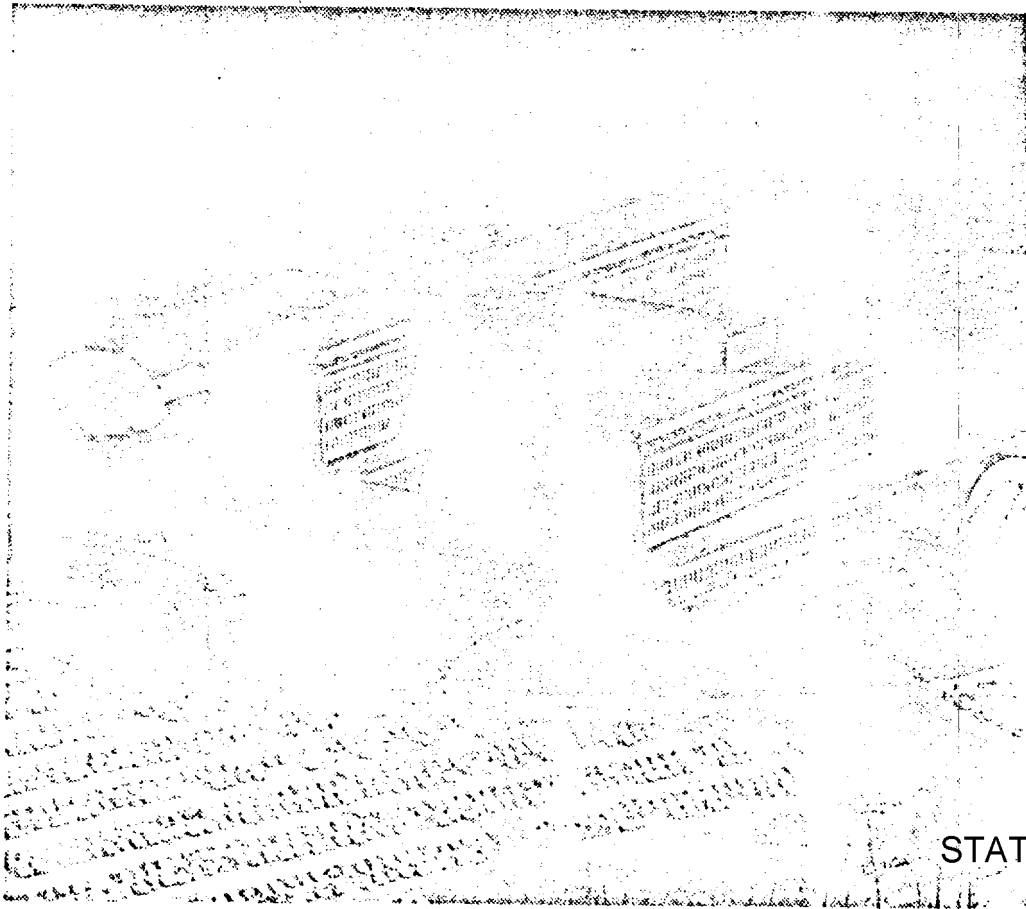
People in government tend to stay on, and CIA had its fair share of stayers left over from some forgotten project or deserted by a bureau chief who didn't get what he wanted and left his recruits to founder for other desks.

There were all those college boys whom the agency hired during Korea, trained as paratroops and guerrillas and then shoved into tents because Gen. MacArthur wouldn't let them into his theater. The same morale problem existed for them as did later for the Cuban exiles awaiting the Bay of Pigs. Some of them departed in

peace, but some are still around, like the Bay of Pigs men who so embarrassed Richard Nixon during the last campaign.

So I am not against a housecleaning. The times have changed, and in some ways they now more nearly approximate the time when CIA was born. The need then was for intelligence only. Josef Stalin's decision to attempt conquest of Western Europe by manipulation, the use of fronts and the purchasing of loyalty turned the agency into a house of dirty tricks. It was necessary. Absolutely necessary, in my view. But it lasted long after the necessity was gone.

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R. HARRIS SMITH. *OSS: The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency*. Pp. xii, 458. Berkeley, Cal.: University of California Press, 1972. \$10.95.

This is an admirable and informative work, skillfully pieced together from all available printed sources in addition to 73 personal interviews with former members of the OSS (Office of Strategic Services), plus telephone conversations with 103 others. It is written with fair-mindedness and moderation, and is equipped with all the necessary apparatus of footnotes, lists of names, and an extensive index. It is a secret history in the sense that it describes operations the official documentation of which is still classified, but it is not written from secret classified sources. Although the author was briefly a member of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), resigning in 1968, his former employers made it clear that classified OSS archives would not be made available to him. (Thus he did not use, and probably is unaware of the existence of, an administrative history of the agency, ordered by General Donovan on July 25, 1944, of which Conyers Read of the University of Pennsylvania was appointed Chief, and of which large fragments were completed by the time the project was discontinued in September 1945.) It is indeed remarkable how comprehensive and detailed and knowledgeable this book is, in spite of its not having had the benefit of access to classified sources.

This volume is a much more systematic and analytical history of OSS than any of its predecessors. It avoids the hysterical, gee-whizzy approach which has often characterized previous accounts of General Donovan and the agency. It threads its way with remarkable skill through all the clashes of personalities and all the conflicts among competing branches of our own government, among our allies, governments-in-exile, and among political factions in maquis and underground groups, and judges each situation without *parti pris*. The author's standpoint is constantly that of being in the field, which of course makes his book all the more absorbing. But he does so at the cost of not emphasizing quite enough the organizational and constitutional history of the Washington side of the agency and of how it shifted from a brain-child of the White House created by Executive Order on July 11, 1941 to being fitted into the Joint Chiefs of Staff's chain of command on June 13, 1942.

The author speaks of this book as being a political history of the agency; it is this and more, for he describes how the OSS figured in, and was related to, the whole diplomatic and military history of the war. After a preliminary chapter on the origins of the agency, the operations of OSS are described in each theater of the war, in successive chapters dealing with North Africa, Italy, Yugoslavia, France and Germany, China ("The Chinese Puzzle," an especially good chapter), Thailand and Indochina. In addition, very particular attention is given to Allen Dulles' exploits in Berne from 1942 to 1945. The concluding

chapter is an account as well as a critique of the influence of OSS upon the development of the CIA.

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